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ANA Medics Graduate New Combat Medic Class

Story and Photos By
Pfc. Daniel Rangel
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

JALALABAD, Afghanistan — The first class of medics from the Afghan National Army 201st Corps, 3rd Brigade, 5th Kandak (ANA battalion equivalent) graduated from a combat medic class during a ceremony held Dec. 8 just outside Forward Operating Base Huey in Nangarhar Province.

Lt. Col. Paul MacKenzie, U.S. Army senior advisor to the ANA 201st Corps, 3rd Brigade, spoke during the graduation ceremony.

"You are learning important skills to not only share with your Soldiers, but also to share with your communities throughout Afghanistan wherever you are stationed and wherever you go throughout your professional life," MacKenzie said.

"What we are trying to do is not only make you more complete medics and Soldiers, but also in our own way, trying to make you better citizens of Afghanistan," Mackenzie said. "Because, the duty of any citizen of a country is to contribute to that country the best that you can with the skills that you have."

The class was designed to bring Afghans closer to self-sufficiency so that Coalition Forces may return home. Mackenzie also expressed this idea in his remarks.

"When your unit goes to a shurra to meet with the local people and they come to you and they say, 'I have a child who has an injury. Where are the Americans to help us?' You can say, 'I can help you. You don't need the Americans. I have the skills," MacKenzie said.

Sgt. 1st Class Jason Brooks, U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge of the medical clinic at Forward Operating Base Fenty, was instrumental in putting the five-day class together.

"They've learned everything from how to clear an airway, to trauma assessment, to using different types of bandages and wound dressings to stop bleeding," Brooks said. "They're learning a basic level, which is basically a combat-lifesaver level. There's going to be an intermediate and advanced course, which will have more medical tasks and be more like what a U.S. Army medic does."

Brooks is optimistic about the future of the class and has already scheduled classes for the day after graduation.

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Army Lt. Col. Paul MacKenzie, senior advisor to the ANA 201st Corps, 3rd Brigade, presents a combat medic patch and certificate during the graduation ceremony held Dec. 8 outside Forward Operating Base Huey in Nangarhar Province.

A Word from the Leadership—

Sgt. Maj. Stacy Lehfeldt...

Service members of the Regional Security Adviser Command-Central (RSAC-C):

The Holiday season is upon us and as we close out 2007 and look forward to the New Year you can look back and be proud of everything you have accomplished this past year.

For many of you this will be your first Christmas away from family and friends and for others this will be just one of many spent away from loved ones, regardless, this Christmas will have a special meaning as you go about doing your part in accomplishing our mission and in the years to come you will reflect back on these days and tell your grandchildren of the goodwill you helped bring to a Nation.

With December upon us comes the changing of the seasons and scenery, gone will be plush green river valleys and sweltering heat and in their place will be the snow capped mountains and temperatures that will make one wish they didn't have to ride in the turret. Watch over each other for symptoms of cold weather injuries and be prepared to have convoys take longer as driving habits are forced to change with the inclement weather.

I want to extend a special thank-you to all of those who coordinated our talent show and for our very talented service members who participated, it was a great event. I also want to say thank you to our SECFOR team that coordinated and conducted our Thanksgiving Day Turkey Shoot event, it too was a great event. It also gave certain individuals an opportunity to demonstrate through their shooting skills why it probably is a good thing that they are on a staff.

Mêtawânom shomâ râ ba Command Sgt. Maj. Reza mo'arefi konom. (I would like to introduce you to Command Sgt. Maj. Reza) Command Sgt. Maj. Reza comes to the 201st Corps from the 207th Corps where he was the Command Sergeant Major.

It is with great regret that we acknowledge the loss of Sgt. Phillip Bocks who was killed in an ambush. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends and comrades.

And as always we cannot allow complacency to creep into any aspect of our lives. Every single one of you is an essential part of this team. Take some time and show your appreciation to our civilian team members who make it possible for us to remain focused on our primary mission and make our day to day living here at Camp Aimal very comfortable. I want to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! May God bless our RSAC-C family.

Semper Fidelis,

SgtMaj Stacy Lehfeldt
RSAC-C SgtMaj

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ANA Medics Graduate New Combat Medic Class (*Cont.*)

"There's been nine Soldiers go through the class so far and we have another class of ten more starting tomorrow," Brooks said. "They really picked up the information quickly. There were some classes I thought were going to take a lot longer and be harder to grasp, but we've had outstanding interpreters and support from the ANA medical officers."

Army Spc. Eric Detrick, 173rd BCT (Airborne), BSB, Medical Company C was also a member of the three-Soldier Embedded Training Team who conducted the class.

"We've just been trying to get these guys some good training so they can save some lives out there," Detrick said. "Without the medical skills that we're giving them, they wouldn't be able to help their guys out and try and save their lives."

Detrick explained that the team's most daunting challenge was the language barrier. At least it was at first, but with the right help the challenge was quickly overcome.

"We were kind of worried that some medical terms that we would use wouldn't be recognized in their language, but the interpreters were awesome in describing what we were trying to get across to them," Detrick said. "We weren't sure if they were going to know the term trachea and words like that."

ANA Soldier Muhammad Quasim who participated in the class, understands the importance of using the knowledge he has been given.

"It's great because during battle we're going to have casualties," Quasim said. "But by doing this we can save the life of that person."

Quasim also understands that the students can take their knowledge and help their local communities.

"It's a benefit to us and our village because if some person becomes sick or injured we can treat them," Quasim said. "We're very proud of that."

Master Sgt. Eric Post, U.S. Army advisor to the Afghan National Army 3rd Brigade Surgeon, led the team of ETT mentors.

Post expressed his desire to see the class grow to the point where the students can become the teachers so that the ANA will become more independent of Coalition Forces' help.

"We want to identify the top-notch Soldiers and make a teaching class to train the trainer," Post said.

Before beginning the graduation ceremony, Post paid perhaps the biggest compliment one Soldier can pay to another that demonstrated his confidence in his ANA students.

Background Photo: *Army Master Sgt. Eric Post conducts the final combat medic class of a five-day series held Dec. 8 at the Jalalabad Garrison Troop Medical Clinic.*

ANA and Coalition Establish JOC in EZAO

Story By 1st Lt. Jacob D. Margolis
3rd Brigade, Personnel Officer

JALALABAD, Afghanistan - At Forward Operating Base Fenty, Task Force Bayonet, in partnership with the Embedded Training Team advisors of the 3rd Brigade, have helped the Afghan National Army (ANA) establish a Joint Operations Center (JOC) with Bayonet.

The JOC is a huge step towards the ANA leading all future combat operations in the Eastern Zone Area of Operation (EZAO). It will allow the ANA the ability to coordinate more effectively with coalition partners.

The JOC is currently in its infancy, but is already providing ease of coordination between the battle-space managers in the EZAO and the ANA of 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps.

The JOC is already providing a look into that future. BG Zamari, the commander of the ANA 3rd Brigade, 201st Corps and his staff have been able to learn and improve on their combat effectiveness by working side-by-side with their coalition counterparts in the JOC.

The 3rd Brigade staff is able to learn by seeing what level of coordination is required between staff sections and by observing the interactions between the staff of Task Force Bayonet. The interaction is teaching the ANA to produce orders that look at primary, alternate, contingency and emergency courses of action as well as teaching them to manage the battle-space and work to deconfliction issues with coalition forces.

As the planning capability of the ANA improves, so will the ANA's role in leading the fight in the Eastern Zone.

201st Corps Leadership Conducts Partnership Visit With 3d MarDiv

Story and Photo By
Maj. Rene Trevino
Logistics Advisor

OKINAWA, Japan – Nine officers and noncommissioned officers from the 201st Corps, Afghan National Army (ANA), conducted a partnership visit with 3rd Marine Division in Okinawa, Japan from Nov. 2 – 11.

The focus of the visit was to assist in fostering relationships between U.S. and Afghan leadership as well as to improve capability of the ANA.

"I was fortunate to meet with 3rd Marine Division Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Neller, to strengthen our continued relationship and to discuss our mutual goals of assisting 201st Corps and to help bring peace to the nation of Afghanistan," Corps Deputy Commander Col. Yuldash Akbar said. "The facilities and life support were very impressive."

The III Marine Expeditionary Force, 3rd Marine Division currently provides Marines to the Regional Security Advisory Command-Central (RSAC-C) to assist in advising the 201st Corps leadership and will continue to provide Marines for subsequent Operation Enduring Freedom rotations.

The purpose of this visit was to observe daily operations of a staff comparable to that of the size of the 201st Corps staff, and to leave with a greater understanding of garrison, sustainment and training functions.

Afghanistan National Army leaders receive instruction on the use of the sand table from 4th Marines. From left to right: Maj. Gen. Shah, Col. Akbar, Brig. Gen. Mangal, Col. Nazar, and Maj. Tariq.

Col. Emam Nazar said, "This trip was very good for the development of the 201st Corps. The most memorable thing for me was how disciplined, organized, and professional the 3rd Marine Division is. You could tell the relationships were very strong between the officers and Senior NCO's." Nazar is the 201st Corps personnel officer.

The visit benefited the 3rd Marine Division by providing an opportunity for 201st Corps leaders to establish personal contact with Marines that are conducting pre-deployment training for subsequent deployments to Afghanistan.

The delegation was also able to interact with the next rotation of Marines, led by Col. Jeff Haynes, and attended the Marine celebration of the 232nd Birthday of the Marines on Nov. 8.

JBAD Garrison Conducts Winter HA Mission

Story and Photos by
Lt. Matt Underwood
201st RSAC-C
Garrison Advisor, Jalalabad

Afghan soldiers unload bags of rice at the village of Char Bagh, provided during a joint Afghan-U.S. Humanitarian Assistance on Nov. 6. Over 21,000 pounds of supplies were provided to six villages in the Gamberri Desert region.

GAMBERRI DESERT, Afghanistan – Afghans from the villages of Char Bagh, Kasazizkhan, Daronta, Anbour, Kashmoon, and Ahmedzai in the Gamberri Desert region are looking forward to winter with a sigh of relief after receiving over 21,000 pounds of food and supplies.

The Afghan National Army soldiers of the Nangahar Garrison, along with U.S. personnel from the Jalalabad Navy Garrison Embedded Training Team distributed the supplies and sports equipment on Nov. 7.

The villagers expressed extreme gratitude for the supplies, as the winter months are the hardest to get through.

U.S. Air Force Capt. Weilun Lin, coordinated the operation, stated that the children were especially grateful for the visit.

"The kids just lit up when we started passing out soccer balls and frisbees discs," Lin said. "While shy at first, when they saw the stuff we were handing out, especially coming from Americans, they eagerly rushed up to receive them shake hands and pose for pictures."

The visit was arranged through the Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VI Humanitarian Assistance program. Under the program, different U.S. units, working alongside their Afghan counterparts, distribute food and supplies in order to alleviate the ravages of winter.

The village elders were very grateful, and the supplies will be distributed among all the villages in the area.

OMLTs Bring Resources to the Fight

DARULAMAN, Afghanistan - Since the beginning of October, a French infantry Kandak Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) has been advising the 1st Kandak, 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army (ANA) with four company teams.

The OMLT has a total of 50 personnel, and its company teams are deployed to four forward operating bases (FOBs) in three different provinces: two in Kapisa (Nijrab and Tagab) and one each in Logar and Wardak. Their mission is to advise and train the ANA companies in their respective areas of operation.

Each company team has a variety of special equipment, including the 20 mm heavy machine gun, which is mounted on the VAB.

It is an impressive weapon system because of its tremendous firepower, which allows the VAB to give direct-fire support to units in contact.

The headquarters of this French OMLT is located at Camp Dubs, in Darulaman, with the Brigade HQ, working closely together and with great cooperation.

When the Brigade came back from Eastern Zone, the French OMLT and 1st Kandak (ANA) commander, with several other U.S. and ANA authorities, welcomed both the old brigade staff and the incoming French brigade staff with a marvellous French breakfast.

Background Photo: *The French VAB, similar to the U.S. Armored Personnel Carrier with a 20 mm heavy machine gun.*

2nd Brigade Conducts Battle Focused Training

Story and Photos By
Maj. Caryn Kirkpatrick
2nd Bde. Personnel Advisor

KABUL, Afghanistan - As the "60-Day Training Plan" continues in the 2nd Brigade the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) and Embedded Transition Teams (ETT) keep the focus on high training standards. The 60-day plan is preparation for the move to the Eastern Zone, in early 2008. Weapons training fundamentals and time on the firing range using the AK-47, RPK, PKM, DiSHka, RPG-7, mortar and sniper rifle has been successful in building confidence amongst the soldiers.

The 1st Kandak senior advisor, Lt. Col. Christopher Nash, U.S. Marine Corps, and his team have been busy on the ranges with their ANA counterparts since mid-November. Two ranges focused on mortars and sniper rifle use.

In mid-December Army Staff Sgt. Philip Ingram and Marine Cpl. Ryan Harris, advisors to Weapons Company, lead ranges for 26 ANA soldiers, focusing on familiarization and weapons zeroing.

According to the advisors the ANA like shooting the weapons but are not too keen on the Preliminary Marksmanship Instructions that come before the actual range.

Advisors work hand-in-hand with ANA trainers to ensure soldiers understand the fundamentals and range safety. "I was really impressed with one of the ANA NCOs," Harris said. "This NCO really knew his stuff when it came to the mortar, he is one of very few ANA that I have seen that is able to operate, instruct and supervise a complete weapons system." The mortar range focused on mortar maintenance, round count book, basic form, and fit and functions of the weapon.

On the whole, the brigade strives to ensure the training plan is complied with minimal interruptions for missions or training exercises.

During training, a "quick response to fire" drill took place. "I think they did well. The ANA did the right things, like getting their soldiers fed before rolling out; they had their vehicles on-line and waiting for the roll-out order. Once we arrived at our post, the ANA knew their positions and jumped to it. For a first-time roll-out like this, I think they did a good job and they are continuously improving," Ingram said.

The 2nd and 3rd Kandaks are in their infancy and developing well with the guidance of their advisors. The Combat Service Support (CSS) Kandak continues to improve and learn the essentials of CSS under the guidance of their senior advisor, Army Maj. Chuck McGinnis. The Brigade works with the additional assistance and knowledge of the French, Romanian, Italian, and Turkish Armies who are also assisting with training.

2nd Brigade Afghan National Army Soldiers train on various weapons at the rifle range on Pol-e-Charki in preparation for moving to the Eastern Zone this Spring.

Additional training is taking place with logistics, finance, personnel, communications, operations and the military decision making process. Some classes are being instructed by MPRI contractors in coordination with the ETTs. In addition to these classes, soldiers are learning how to drive vehicles, read, write and speak English and Dari, as well as physical fitness training.

The desire to learn exhibited among the ANA is rewarding, however most rewarding is when ANA personnel "step-up" and lead their own training. The attitude of helping Afghanistan is evident throughout the ranks. Training will continue for the 2nd Brigade until they are "mission ready" for what lies ahead of them.

New Police Hit the Streets

Story and Photo By Maj. Joe Cognitore, Capt. Jon Laskowski and Sgt. 1st Class Wilson Tang
ANCOP Advisors

KABUL, Afghanistan—The Central Training Center in Kabul recently graduated the 6th Battalion Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) on Dec. 6.

The six week advanced training consisted of Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Riot Control, Counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED), Patrol, Map Reading, Weapons Training, Drug Investigation, Report Writing, Checkpoints and Leadership.

Several Military Police from the 201st Corps, Afghan National Army also trained side-by-side with their Afghan brothers. This was the first combined training of ANCOP and military police and the first step towards making a true Afghan National Security Force.

"Highly Trained and Mission Ready"

Training was conducted by DynCorp International and U.S. Army Advisors.

Once the unit graduates they have little time to rest as they prepare for their first ever national mission. They are preparing to deploy for the Focused District Development program.

Several unit members missed the graduation ceremony because they were on advance party operations. ANCOP will temporarily replace district police departments around the country. This will allow the police departments to focus on training becoming a more proficient and professional force.

The battalion's first assignments include the Konduz Province in the 209th Corps and the Corps Farah Province in the 207th Corps.

Afghan National Civil Order Police and Afghan National Army military police stand side by side in a "tight line" riot formation.

French Provide Commando Type Training to ANA

Story and Photo By
Capt. Schweitzer
OIC COY3, 3rd Kandak

1st Brigade Afghan National Army soldiers enhance their skills on the ropes during a training course held Nov. 11-15.

DARULAMAN, Afghanistan - The French Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) organized a commando type training for 1st Brigade of 201st Corps from Nov. 11-15.

At the beginning of the course, there were 32 candidates from every kandak of the brigade. Unfortunately, because several of them were in mission, and because some of them did not passed the final tests, there were only 26 candidates who were certified.

Though the level of the training course was difficult, the aim of the training was not to train commandos. The focus was given on training skills in different techniques.

During the course, the soldiers were trained on four main techniques. The first was an obstacle course race, which permitted the soldiers to feel the field, and to prepare their bodies for the fight. The second technique trained was close combat training to develop aggressiveness. Other classes were given in knot making and various ropes techniques, such as repelling and cableway.

The Afghan National Army Non-Commissioned Officers displayed very good behavior during the training course; were diligent and attentive; learned the techniques very fast, and were very good in practical subjects.

These NCOs will be responsible for teaching their knowledge to their companies and kandaks.

(Above) Provincial leaders gather in Jalalabad with the 201st Corps Commander Brig. Gen. Rahim Wardak, to discuss goals and objectives of the 201st Corps in the provinces of the Eastern Zone Area of Operation.
(Right) Members of the French Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team teach Commando type techniques to members of 1st Brigade.

Members of the Afghan National Army pose in front of the 3rd Marine Division Headquarters at Camp Courtney.

Navy Cmdr. Brian Kuerbitz speaks with Char Bagh village elder, Seedullah during a joint Afghan-U.S. Humanitarian Assistance Visit on Nov. 6.

Workers paint the Sofi-Coat Bridge in preparation for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Dec. 30.

Dr. Donald Winter, Secretary of the Navy, receives the Battle Update Briefing with the 201st Corps Commander and Deputy Commander.